



Media Release

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Arkansas Juvenile Program Receives National Accreditation

Program in Alexander, Ark., meets American Correctional Association standards

The Arkansas Juvenile Assessment and Treatment Center, in Alexander, has received the prestigious American Correctional Association accreditation, the state Division of Youth Services announced today.

The residential program for juvenile offenders is operated by a private company, G4S Youth Services, under a contract with the state.

Following a three-day ACA inspection last November, the program received compliance scores of 100 percent in mandatory standards and 99 percent in non-mandatory standards. The more than 450 standards examined include quality of life, security, food service, medical care, and educational programs. The three non-mandatory standards that were not met all related to the design of the physical plant.

The accreditation was officially awarded during the ACA annual convention in Dallas on Jan. 12.

“We have truly reached a milestone,” said Ron Angel, director of the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Youth Services. “The accreditation process helps the state ensure that the best practices available in juvenile justice are being used to rehabilitate children entrusted to us.”

“I’m very proud of our dedicated staff and the exceptional job they did to achieve accreditation,” said Todd Speight, the G4S program administrator. “Our challenge now is to not only maintain the ACA’s high standards but to improve on them.”

The process of developing policies, procedures, and practices for the 450-plus standards usually takes up to 18 months, but staff completed the task in only nine months, Speight added.

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The program joins the other five Arkansas programs that are ACA accredited. They are the Regional Juvenile Programs at Mansfield, Lewisville, Dermott, Colt, and Harrisburg. All of Arkansas' juvenile programs eligible for ACA accreditation are now accredited.

AJATC is a residential treatment facility that serves approximately 140 of the most acute juveniles in Arkansas' juvenile justice system. The facility also provides assessments for all children adjudicated to the state for rehabilitation.

The ACA is the oldest and largest international correctional association in the world. It serves all disciplines within the correctional profession and is dedicated to excellence in every aspect of the field.